the Revenue Department on the one hand and the Forest Department on the other that lay at the root of all their troubles. If a cardamom ryot at Devicolam cultivating 10 acres of land found it necessary to cut and remove some trees over four feet in girth, he had to apply to the Divisional Forest Officer at Kottayam or Malayattur and it would often take several months to get the necessary sanction from those officers. Another source of hardship was the imposition of a penalty by the Divisional Forest Officer if a charge of cutting trees from the cardamom areas was preferred by such low-paid Forest subordinates as Foresters, Guards, etc., who rarely visited the locality. He further observed that too much tree-growth on a cardamom garden would be as bad for cardamom cultivation as too little and the practical cultivator alone knew how many trees should be removed from a particular area for purposes of cardamom cultivation. The Member in conclusion prayed that the cardamom cultivators might be permitted to cut and remove as many trees as might be found necessary in the interests of cultivation.

President's reply.—Cardamom lands are situated within the Cardamom Hills Reserve, and as such, they have to be held subject to the control of the Forest Department. You have referred to the difficulty of obtaining permits for the felling of trees from registered cardamom lands from the Divisional Forest Officer who lives far away. The obtaining of permits cannot be dispensed with on this ground. The question of delegating the power of issuing permits to Range Officers will be considered, along with the revision of the Cardamom Rules which is now engaging the attention of the Government.

V. PUBLIC WORKS.—*(Continued.)*

68. Some local needs.

Mr. Aiyappan Raman (Member, Vaikam taluk) said that, after the annexation of Vaikom and the neighbouring taluks, many works of public utility were not being undertaken by the Government to improve the condition of agriculture in North Travancore. The Government themselves had acknowledged that the state of communications in North Travancore compared unfavourably with that in South Travancore, and promised that the grievance on that score would be redressed. But Vaikam remained in the same condition as ever. So early as 1062, Government had recognised the fact that expenditure on irrigation works was confined almost exclusively to South Travancore, while in North Travancore the repairs and restoration of irrigation channels and bunds were left for the most part to the ryots themselves. With a view to remedy that evil, a scheme was sanctioned by which an annual grant of Rs. 20,000, subsequently raised to Rs. 30,000, was allotted to the Northern and Quilon Divisions to be expended on irrigation and drainage channels. But the funds so allowed were not availed of to any large extent. Unless a declaration of policy was made by the Government and promptly followed up by necessary action by the Public Works Department, there was no hope of finding a solution to that vexed question.

The utter neglect of drainage channels in and around the town of Vaikam had made that town one of the most insanitary in the whole State. The construction of bunds at unsuitable places had caused ruin to cultivation due to stagnation of water in several places which prejudicially affected the health of the people. It was highly necessary that all the old canals should be repaired and maintained. On former occasions when the question was pressed on the attention of the Government by the members of the Assembly representing Vaikam, they were assured that the work of improving the drainage channels would be taken up soon, and in pursuance of that promise sanction had been accorded to the opening of the Kaniyan *thodu* and the repair of one or two canals in Vaikam town. Those repairs, however, had never been undertaken. Vaikam was the worst-served taluk in respect of means of communication. There was an old wooden bridge across the Puttanthodu just a furlong south of the Vaikam temple. The dangerous and dilapidated condition of the bridge had been pointed out to the Government long ago. A part of the bridge had fallen down. The Member requested that the restoration of that bridge might be taken in hand at once.)

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The Member then urged that the following works be taken up by the Government :—

(1) The village road from the 110th mile-stone in the Kottayam–Muvattupuzha road to the Nizhur temple should be repaired, extended to the 3rd mile stone on the Talayolaparampu-Kuttattukulam road and rendered cartable. The people would hand over the necessary lands free. The village road of Kattampakkal had almost disappeared, a portion thereof having been registered away. The Member requested that that road might be improved without delay.

(2) The canal between Kattampakkal and Nizhur, which had silted up, should be restored to its former condition.

(3) Mekkara Puttan canal in Kulasekharamangalam was another canal which was in urgent need of repair in the interests of agriculture.

(4) (*a*) The Mattu *thodu* between Chempil and Kulasekharamangalam ; (*b*) the canal south of Turuttummel *kari* ; (*c*) Valliyilthodu between Ullala and Talayazham ; and (*d*) Anchumana *thodu* between Idayazham and Kudavechur should be urgently restored.

(5) A cartable road from Vaikam to Kumarakam *via* Vechur should be constructed, and the Vaikam-Vechur road should be raised, widened and converted into a cartable road.

(6) A canal between Kadappur and Kanakkarichira, connecting the Kattachira canal with the Manjur-Nindur canal, should be opened.

President's reply.—You referred to the construction of a canal between Kadappur and Kanakkarichira. The Chief Engineer says that there are difficulties in the way, and that the work will require to be investigated. An investigation will be ordered. Regarding the construction of a cartable road from Vaikam to Kumarakam, the portion from Vaikam to Vechur will be taken up first, next year. As regards the widening and deepening of the canal between Kattampakkal and Nizhur, the cost was once estimated at Rs. 20,000. This was the estimate drawn up a long time ago ; and now the cost must be greater. The whole work has to be done afresh. The matter will be considered.

All the other drainage canals mentioned in the representation are minor works and estimates will be called for in respect of them. You referred to the Puttan *thodu* bridge. The matter will be looked into. You suggested the repair of the road from the 110th mile-stone of the Kottayam-Muvattupuzha road to the Nizhur temple. That will also be considered. You say that the people are willing to give the necessary lands for this road. The promise is noted. All the other matters mentioned in the representation will also receive the attention of Government.

69. Improvement of means of communiction in North Travancore.

Mr. Narayanan Narayanan (Member, Kottayam taluk) observed that the fact could not be ignored that, in the matter of facility of communication, the people of South Travancore, with its Kodayar works and substantial minor irrigation works, were better off than those of North Travancore. Of the 2,646 miles of main road in the State, 1,030 miles were in South Travancore. The Member requested that the following works be undertaken by Government :—

(1) A railway line should be opened from Kottarakara to Alwaye through Kottayam.

(2) More money should be sanctioned and spent on communications.

(3) The boats running between Kottayam and Alleppey and between Changanachery and Alleppey should be made to stop at the different boat jetties on the way and take in passengers. It should also be made a rule that the boats which plied between Alleppey and Quilon and between Alleppey and Cochin should await their arrival.

(4) The time-table of the S. I. R. should be so changed as to admit of one more train service between Quilon and Trivandrum or Kottarakara and Trivandrum between 8 and 10 A. M. in the morning.

(5) A cartable bridge should be constructed at the Illikkal crossing, Kottayam.

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